(iii) The literacy rate in India was 64% in 2004-05.

(iv) Among persons of age 15 and above, only 2% had technical degree or diploma or certificate.

(v) Among persons of age 15 - 29, about 2% were reported to have received formal vocational training and another 8% had received non-formal vocational training.

(b) The survey revealed that about 50% of rural households and about 20% of urban households had no literate female member of age group 15 and above.

(c) The Government have several programmes and schemes in the field of adult education, vocational education and vocational training to improve the literacy rate and for skill development.

Denial of Deemed University status

393. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the method of appraisal of any request for Deemed University status;

(b) the criterion on which a Deemed University status is granted;

(c) whether it is a fact that a few institutions were denied Deemed University status initially;

(d) if so, the details of denying such status; and

(e) the grounds on which the decision was reviewed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The Central Government is empowered by Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956 to declare an institution of higher education as 'Deemed-to-be-University', on the advice of the UGC. The UGC has laid down detailed guidelines for consideration of proposals for declaring an institution as 'Deemed-to-be-University'. The proposals received for conferment of 'Deemed-to-be-University' status under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 are examined by the UGC as per the provisions of these guidelines. A committee of eminent experts visits the applicant institution and gives its report, which is considered by the Commission. The UGC then makes appropriate recommendations to the Government. The report of the UGC is examined by the Government and if the applicant institution is found fit to be awarded the 'Deemed-to-be-University' status, it is so notified by the Government.

(b) As per the said guidelines of the UGC, for the purpose of recognition as an Institution 'Deemed-to-be-University', an institution should generally be:

(i) Engaged in teaching programmes and research in chosen fields of specialization, which are innovative and of very high academic standards at the Master's (or equivalent) and / or research levels. It should also have a greater interface with society through extra mural, extension and field action related programmes.

(ii) Making, in its areas of specialisation, distinct contribution to the objectives of the University education system through innovative programmes and on being recognised as a Deemed to be University should be capable of further enriching the University system as well as strengthening teaching and research in the institution, particularly in its area of specialisation.

(iii) Competent to undertake application-oriented programmes in emerging areas, which are relevant and useful to various development sectors and to the society in general.

(iv) In existence for 10 years with infrastructure as prescribed by relevant statutory bodies monitoring education in their field and a management capable of contributing to the University ideals and traditions.

(v) Financially sound and establish a corpus fund of the prescribed amount [Rs.5,00 crore for institutions in the fields of Engineering and Medicine and Rs.3 crore for the institutions conducting programmes in Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities].

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. The proposals relating to grant of status of 'Deemed to be University' to Ponnaiyah Ramajayam Institute of Science & Technology, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu and Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu were initially rejected on the ground of certain deficiencies. These institutions were later declared as Institutions 'Deemed to be Universities' after the deficiencies noted were rectified by them.

Independent Regulator for Higher Education

394. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:
SHRI O.T. LEPCHA:
SHRI D. RAJA:
SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intends to establish an independent regulator for Higher Education in the country by abolishing bodies like All India Council for Technical Education(AICTE), University Grants Commission(UGC) etc.;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) by when the new regulation for higher education will be put in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The Yash Pal Committee has recommended the creation of an all-encompassing National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), with constitutional status to replace the existing regulatory bodies including the University Grants Commission(UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), National Council for Teacher Education(NCTE) and Distance Education Council (DEC) and that all the other regulatory bodies in professional education such as the Medical Council of India (MCI), Dental Council of India (DCI),